*I*n my 30 years with the CHP, I've traveled roads in every corner of California, from deserts to fern canyons, and urban freeways to mountain passes.

Our jobs as CHP employees are just as diverse as California's geography. In this publication, ***24 Hours with the CHP***, we take a photographic journey alongside our employees on a single day, April 30, 1999. Our employees carried cameras with them in darkness and daylight, in the office and on the road.

Their pictures celebrate the extraordinary scope of the duties we perform and the extraordinary people who do them.

24 Hours with the CHP also celebrates a milestone. This year is the 70th Anniversary of our organization. On August 14, 1929, traffic officers from individual county motorcycle squads became state civil servants with a six-day work week and a monthly salary of $170. Officers were issued state motorcycles. Captains and inspectors got black and white patrol cars.
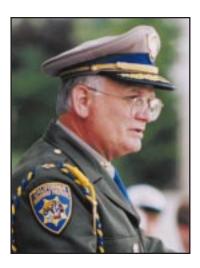
From the beginning, the Legislature gave the CHP a mandate - focus on reducing accidents first, issuing tickets second. That's still our goal today, as ***24 Hours with the CHP*** will demonstrate.

I'm impressed again, when I thumb through this book, with the impact today's CHP employees have on life in California.

Virtually every citizen, during any given day, is touched by the work we do. We may call an ambulance for a crash victim, unravel a freeway snarl, assist a stranded motorist, conduct a big rig safety check, sponsor a children's bike rodeo or pull a drunk driver off the road. We do these tasks, not once, but dozens, even hundreds of times in any 24-hour period.

24 Hours with the CHP also peels back the clichés about law enforcement. It reveals the true heart of our organization, which beats with fierce loyalty, impressive ingenuity, love of family and, perhaps most important, the ability to laugh at itself.

I hope you enjoy this photographic ride-along with the CHP's employees, both uniformed and non-uniformed.

D. O. HELMICK
Commissioner